



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COMMISSIONERS' INITIATIVE PAYS OFF FOR LOCAL STUDENTS**

Today, Franklin County Commissioners, Children Services (FCCS) and local private partners presented students, who are aging out of the foster care system and heading off to college in the Fall, with Back-to-School items to assist them with their transition to college life.

The FCCS Emancipation Department provides on-going services to youth who have aged out of the foster care system. The program currently has 64 (36 males and 28 females) individuals who will be attending college this fall. Students will attend Ohio State University, Central State University, Columbus State Community College, Wright State University, University of Akron, Otterbein University, Central Ohio Technical College, Muskingum University, University of Cincinnati, University of Toledo, University of Northwestern Ohio, Kent State University and the United States Military.

"This event is a celebration of accomplished, motivated young adults who are ready to start the next chapter of their lives," said Commissioner John O'Grady. "I am so proud of our youth and thankful to our local partners whose donations play a key role in preparing these young adults for their college transition."

"College can be an exciting but stressful time for any student," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "These outstanding youth have worked tirelessly to reach this point in their lives, and I am very proud of them. It's essential that these students have the tools they need to succeed in their academic careers, so that good jobs await them in the future."

"These students are role models in our Franklin County community. I wish them the best of luck as they begin their college and military careers and I look forward to hearing about their future success stories," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown.

Students received gift cards from Limited Brands and The Easton Community Foundation to purchase back to school clothing, Visa, Mastercard or American Express gift cards from Fifth Third Bank, PNC and Huntington Bank for assistance in purchasing books and first aid kits from United Healthcare. Steptoe & Johnson Attorneys at Law sponsored a reception with snacks and beverages for the students and their mentors to enjoy after the event.

Franklin County's Children Services Emancipation Department also works to assist students to receive help accessing funds that provide them with items such as computers and sheets and towels for dorm life.

Students also receive assistance to access funds that pay partial tuition and staff arrange for host homes for the students coming home for the holidays.